

## POSTER

# A MODEL FOR THE FORMATION OF THE PERSON-CENTERED DENTAL CARE PROVIDER

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**D**ental education continues to emphasize scientific knowledge and technical skills, yet research reveals that what matters most to patients is how we communicate and relate to them. How do we teach trainees communication and relational skills and continue to cultivate these skills throughout clinical practice?

A comprehensive model for the formation of the patient-centered dental provider is proposed and is represented by the metaphor of a tree. The model is the fruit of interviews with dental patients, observation of dental professionals, and review of literature on patient-centered care, patient satisfaction and malpractice trends. Six core relational skills include: Introduce, Solicit, Listen, Empathize, Explain, and Power of the patient (ISLEEP) and are represented by the branches of the tree.

Discerning how to respond to a patient, how to apply the ISLEEP skills, moment by moment, requires being present with a kind intention, the definition of mindfulness. Mindfulness practices, represented by water, cultivate the roots of the tree which are the four aspects of mindfulness: Equanimity, Attentiveness, Self-awareness, and Empathy (E.A.S.E). Rooted in mindfulness, the dental care provider responds with intelligent and kind action, or whole person care, enriching both patient and provider. ■